

PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT
STATEMENT 8

BEFORE THE
PHILADELPHIA WATER, SEWER AND STORM WATER RATE BOARD

In the Matter of the Philadelphia Water Department's Proposed Change in Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Rates and Related Charges	Fiscal Years 2026 - 2027
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Direct Testimony

of

Glen Abrams, Laura Copeland and Paul Fugazzotto

on behalf of

The Philadelphia Water Department

Dated: February 2025

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY**

2
3 **Q1. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND POSITION WITH THE PHILADELPHIA**
4 **WATER DEPARTMENT.**

5 A1. My name is Glen Abrams. I am the Deputy Commissioner of Communications and
6 Engagement at the Philadelphia Water Department (“PWD” or “Department”).

7
8 Testifying with me are Laura Copeland, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Education,
9 Community Engagement, and Government Affairs and Paul Fugazzotto, Assistant
10 Deputy Commissioner for Communications and Customer Information, both for the
11 Department.

12
13 **Q2. WOULD EACH OF YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR RESPECTIVE**
14 **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE?**

15 A2. Our respective backgrounds and experience are summarized below:

16
17 Mr. Abrams

18 I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Master of City and Regional
19 Planning from Ohio State University. I have held several positions with the Department. I
20 was the Manager of Strategic Policy and Coordination from November 2010 to March
21 2013. I have been in my current position since August 2019. My resume of experience is
22 attached and marked as Schedule GA-1.

23
24 My responsibilities include developing and implementing strategies that enhance the
25 Department’s services and engagement with its customers, all residents, elected officials,

1 media, and key stakeholders. Additionally, I and my staff act as the spokesperson for the
2 Commissioner on customer, community, and public affairs issues.

3
4 Ms. Copeland

5 I hold a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Marketing from Temple
6 University and am a veteran of the United States Army. Since joining the Department in
7 October of 2000, I have served as a communications professional, and advanced to
8 managing the Public Relations unit in 2007. I have been in my current position as of
9 January 2021. My resume of experience is attached and marked as Schedule LC-1.

10
11 My responsibilities include managing the Communications and Engagement Division's
12 education, community engagement, and government affairs units, and ensuring they align
13 with the Department's regulatory requirements.

14
15 Mr. Fugazzotto

16 I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts from West Virginia University and a
17 certificate in Historic Preservation from Bucks County Community College. I have
18 studied Strategic Communications and Community and Regional Planning at the graduate
19 level at Purdue University and Temple University. Since starting with the Department as
20 a communications consultant in 2010, I have become a civil servant and have held
21 positions of increasing responsibility. I have been in my current position since September
22 2019. My resume of experience is attached and marked as Schedule PF-1.

1 My responsibilities include managing the Communication and Engagement Divisions'
2 media relations, digital and creative communications units, and the PWD Customer
3 Contact Center for billing, service, and emergency inquiries.
4

5 **Q3. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY?**

6 A3. The purpose of our testimony is to provide an overview of the Department's education
7 and outreach efforts.
8

9 **Q4. PLEASE IDENTIFY THE SCHEDULES THAT ACCOMPANY THIS**
10 **TESTIMONY.**

11 A4. The following schedules accompany this testimony:

12 Schedule GA-1: Resume of Glen Abrams

13 Schedule LC-1: Resume of Laura Copeland

14 Schedule PF-1: Resume of Paul Fugazzotto
15

16 **II. OVERVIEW OF PWD COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY**
17 **ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**
18

19 **Q5. PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S**
20 **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS.**

21 A5. The Department's Communication and Engagement Division ("Division") plays a critical
22 role of representing the work performed by the Department to the public and representing
23 the interest of the public to the Department. The Division provides many opportunities
24 for customers to learn about water and play a part in the health of our rivers and streams,
25

1 the source of their drinking water. These opportunities are summarized on
2 <https://water.phila.gov/education-outreach/>.

3
4 **Q6. PLEASE DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT’S EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**
5 **REGARDING CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

6 A6. Communication and outreach efforts, undertaken by the Department, include virtual and
7 in-person events, promotional materials and advertising as well as online resources.

8 During 2024, the Department participated in three Community Legal Services’ in-person
9 Utility Clinics on March 15th, June 13th, and November 12th, along with representatives
10 from PWD, PECO, Philadelphia Gas Works (“PGW”), Department of Revenue, PA

11 Department of Human Services, Energy Coordinating Agency (“ECA”), Utility
12 Emergency Services Fund (“UESF”), and the Pennsylvania Utility Commission (“PUC”).

13 These were comprehensive, one-stop shops where dedicated PWD staff helped customers
14 apply for assistance and answer questions. The Department also held virtual Assistance
15 Clinics on most Wednesday evenings in April, August, and September, where dedicated
16 PWD staff helped customers apply for assistance.

17
18 PWD also promoted customer assistance program resources and career opportunities at
19 numerous events, including Philadelphia Zoo Community Nights (April 25), Hispanic
20 Fiesta (June 22 and 24), Councilmembers’ and State Representative’s Resource Fairs
21 (April 19, May 18, June 20), Juneteenth Parade and Festival (June 16), Puerto Rican Day
22 Parade (Sept 29), Community Youth & Senior Health Fair (April 13), and many other
23 events.

1 Additionally, Public Affairs staff began a senior outreach campaign to provide access to
2 PWD programs and services in residential neighborhoods. Through this effort, staff
3 partnered with local elected officials, participating in 25 events, connecting
4 approximately 1,034 seniors in Philadelphia with PWD programs and services. Public
5 Affairs is planning an in-person event with Philadelphia’s utility partners along with
6 stakeholders including CLS, and will expand the senior outreach campaign to include
7 faith-based outreach.

8
9 Communications and outreach with regard to customer assistance programs are ongoing
10 and as priority of the Department, assistance program information is shared at these
11 events as well.

12
13 Please note that the Department has provided customer assistance, including Tiered
14 Assistance Program (“TAP”) outreach updates in its quarterly reports to the Rate Board
15 pursuant to the Settlement and 2023 Rate Determination, which are posted at the Board’s
16 website, [https://www.phila.gov/departments/water-sewer-storm-water-rate-board/about/..](https://www.phila.gov/departments/water-sewer-storm-water-rate-board/about/)

17
18
19 **Q7. PLEASE DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT’S EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**
20 **REGARDING WATER CONSERVATION?**

21 A7. Education and outreach around water conservation is an ongoing initiative of PWD.
22 Currently, the Low Income Conservation Assistance Program (“LICAP”) is managed by
23 a third-party vendor, CMC. PWD provides CMC a list of “high usage” customers active
24 on TAP. CMC reaches out to these customers via letters, phone calls, and home visits to
25

1 schedule water audits. CMC also provides the City with feedback detailing which
2 customers received minor repairs and water conservation appliances.

3
4 Since the City began enrolling prequalified customers in TAP under the Low Income
5 Household Water Assistance Program (“LIHWAP”) and the City’s Office of Integrated
6 Data for Evidence and Action (“IDEA”) initiatives, it has referred these prequalified
7 customers with high usage to CMC water conservation assistance. Such customers are
8 eligible for a water audit and to obtain water conservation measures. To date, close to
9 half of all CMC referrals have been for prequalified TAP customers.

10
11 **Q8. PLEASE DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT’S EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**
12 **REGARDING UTILITY SHUT-OFFS.**

13 A8. For customers who have provided their email addresses in the past, PWD transmitted
14 notices to such customers who were in danger of shut-off or who had experienced high
15 account balances during the period April to November 2024. In addition, the PWD
16 emails to customers eligible for service termination included promotion of future
17 assistance clinics. PWD held assistance clinics on almost every Wednesday in August
18 and September 2024 where representatives were available to assist customers with
19 questions relating to applying for water assistance.

20
21 Furthermore, PWD entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the City’s Office
22 of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (“CEO”) to conduct targeted community
23 outreach to Philadelphians facing water shut-off, in delinquency, or currently without
24 water, with the goals of avoiding service termination and providing support for customers
25 applying for assistance, including TAP.

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Q9. PLEASE GENERALLY DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT’S PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS FOR CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

A9. The Department is engaged in an ongoing advertising and promotion campaign to raise customer awareness about and encourage applications for customer assistance. PWD engaged in paid media with Spanish-language radio stations La Mega and Rumba. Advertising with La Mega, launched in January, focused on the Senior Citizen Discount. The radio spots pivoted to promote the return of the Pennsylvania Homeowners Assistance Fund (“PAHAF”). Grants for homeowner expenses, including water utilities. PWD also advertised as an event sponsor at WURD’s Summer of Freedom, in August. As noted above, PWD has also transmitted direct emails to customers in danger of shut-off or with high balances promoting assistance clinics and communicating the availability of water assistance.

PWD continues to advertise customer assistance programs and the availability of grant money for past-due water bills. In this effort, different forms of media were used and directed customers to outreach events as well as one-on-one assistance for help with applications. The forms of media being used for this campaign include social media, websites, radio, television, community flyers, press releases, digital advertising, transit advertising, bill stuffers, and emails.

1 **Q10. PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THE DEPARTMENT WORKS WITH OTHERS TO**
2 **PROMOTE CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS?**

3 A10. Yes. The Department is engaged in providing information to customers through partner
4 programs. The Department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with CEO to
5 conduct targeted community outreach to Philadelphians facing water shut-off, in
6 delinquency, or currently without water. CEO's Community Resource Corps ("CRC")
7 AmeriCorps Program, Community Engagement Team, and Community Resource Team
8 conduct phone banking, texting, and door-to-door canvassing for households at risk of
9 water shut-off. The goals are to avoid water shut-off to certain households (those with
10 children, elderly, or disabled individuals) through the "Raise Your Hand" initiative and
11 provide access to and support in applying for customer assistance, including TAP.

12
13
14 **Q11. IS INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE WITH REGARD TO CUSTOMER**
15 **ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS?**

16 A11. Yes. There are multiple locations on City websites to find information about water
17 customer assistance. These sites and pages are related by links to and from one another.
18 These web locations are described as follows:

- 19
20
- **CAP application.** WRB and PWD have established a Customer Assistance
21 Program (CAP) application website, <https://cap.phila.gov/start>, where customers
22 can request, print, or start an application online.
- 23
- **Water bill customer assistance.** The Revenue Department maintains
24 comprehensive information on water assistance programs at
25

1 <https://phila.gov/waterbillhelp>. The Revenue Department also maintains a page
2 with customer assistance applications and information,

3 <https://www.phila.gov/documents/water-bill-customer-assistance-application-and->
4 [documents.](https://www.phila.gov/documents/water-bill-customer-assistance-application-and-)

- 5
- 6
- 7 • **We Care campaign.** The “We Care” page (<https://water.phila.gov/care>) contains
8 information about grants, payment agreements, TAP, the Senior Citizen Discount,
9 and debt forgiveness.

10

11 **Q12. PLEASE DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR RESIDENTS WITH**
12 **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TO OBTAIN PUBLIC INFORMATION**
13 **AND SERVICES FROM THE DEPARTMENT?**

14 A12. The Department works to ensure meaningful access to the services it provides.

15

16 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter (new Charter Section 8-600) requires all City agencies,
17 including (but not limited to) the Department, to prepare and implement plans that
18 promote access and participation with City services for persons with limited English
19 proficiency. This program is called “Language Access Philly.”

20

21 The Office of Immigrant Affairs manages Language Access Philly, the City’s language
22 access program that oversees language access policies and language services. Individuals
23 who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to
24 read, speak, write, or understand English can be considered limited English proficient, or
25 "LEP." Language Access Philly ensures that City departments can communicate with

1 people with limited English proficiency.

2
3 The Department has Language Access Plan (which was updated in March 2022).

4 [https://www.phila.gov/media/20220322124938/LANGUAGE-ACCESS-PLAN-](https://www.phila.gov/media/20220322124938/LANGUAGE-ACCESS-PLAN-MARCH-2022_FINAL-Signed.pdf)
5 [MARCH-2022_FINAL-Signed.pdf](https://www.phila.gov/media/20220322124938/LANGUAGE-ACCESS-PLAN-MARCH-2022_FINAL-Signed.pdf). The purpose of this Plan is to establish an effective
6 plan and protocol for PWD personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting
7 with, individuals who have limited English proficiency.

8
9 The Department has provided updates regarding outreach in connection with its language
10 access plan in monthly reports provided to the Rate Board.

11
12 **Q13. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE DEPARTMENT’S STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS**
13 **RELATED TO CONSUMER ISSUES?**

14 A13. On September 6, 2024, a virtual Residential Customer Assistance and Services (RCAS)
15 Committee meeting took place concerning several policy areas. First, the group
16 discussed the current status of PWD’s Advance Metering Infrastructure (“AMI”), TAP
17 prequalification efforts accomplished in 2023 and 2024, TAP recertification process
18 improvements, and PWD community outreach efforts. A second virtual stakeholder
19 meeting was held on December 13, 2024, where the group discussed Revenue’s Racial
20 Equity Map, LIHWAP legislation efforts, the recent reduction in customer grants relating
21 to the closure of many pandemic-related programs, and PWD conservation efforts
22 focused on recent TAP auto-enrollees. Notes from each meeting were provided in the
23 Department’s quarterly reports to the Rate Board.

1 **Q14. ARE STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS BENEFICIAL?**

2 A14. Yes. These meetings help PWD improve its education and outreach efforts with a wide
3 range of stakeholders. The discussions benefit both the public and the City, as ideas are
4 shared to improve the customer experience, as well as address high priority issues to the
5 various stakeholders. For example, the group may form smaller subcommittees relating
6 to tenant interests and water conservation, in order to allow for additional focused
7 discussion and expertise to be shared in these areas. The RCAS forum allows the
8 stakeholders to work together on areas of common ground, such as rallying support for
9 LIHWAP legislation and continuing to seek out new possibilities for water customer
10 grant programs. Stakeholder meeting much like RCAS will also facilitate discussion of
11 alternative water and stormwater rate designs to be evaluated over the next few years.

12
13 **Q15. DOES THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**
14 **CONCERNING CHANGING REGULATORY POLICIES AND RELATED**
15 **PROJECTS?**

16 A15. Yes. Our Division has the important role of explaining to PWD customers changing
17 regulatory policies and various plans to comply with such regulations. For instance,
18 Public Affairs has worked closely with PWD's Bureau of Laboratory Services to launch
19 new lead plumbing and water quality initiatives directed at meeting requirements of the
20 Lead and Copper Rule Improvements. In October 2024, PWD launched an online map,
21 allowing residents to learn about the service line materials of their properties. The map
22 includes follow-up actions for residents based on material. Letters and fact sheets were
23 sent out to every water customer to notify them of their service line material and what
24 actions should be taken. Additionally in October 2024, PWD launched the schools and
25 childcare facilities sampling program. The first round of outreach went to more than 100

1 facilities. The new laws require us to offer sampling, along with educational materials, to
2 at least 20% of elementary schools and 20% of childcare facilities every year.

3
4
5 **Q16. HAS PWD ADDRESSED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN THE**
6 **2023 RATE DETERMINATION?**

7 A16. Yes. In the monthly and later, quarterly, reports following the 2023 Rate Determination
8 as well as engaging in ongoing discussions at R-CAS meetings, PWD continued to report
9 on updates relating to: TAP enrollment and retention, Arrearage Forgiveness, TAP
10 outreach/participation and language access enhancements, and other general updates
11 relating to customer assistance. In addition, as specifically requested by the Board, PWD
12 addressed further research and conclusions relating to its enforcement and municipal lien
13 policies. Finally, PWD provided updates in its reports relating to stormwater funding,
14 Rate Design, and credit policy. See PWD Statement 5 for a more detailed discussion of
15 TAP enrollment, retention and enforcement policies. See PWD Statement 7 for
16 discussion of stormwater credits and rate design.

17
18
19 **Q17. PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE NEEDED TO**
20 **SUPPORT PWD COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.**

21 A17. New and updated Federal regulations necessitate additional resources. For instance, the
22 Lead and Cooper Rule Revision (“LCRR”) and Lead and Copper Rule Improvement
23 require substantial new efforts in public education and customer notification. On October
24 13, 2019, the EPA released the proposed LCRR, and the final LCRR was published in the
25 Federal Register on January 15, 2021. Since then, the EPA has shifted the original

1 compliance date from January 16, 2024 to October 16, 2024. The LCRR will have a
2 significant effect on the Water Department's operations by requiring substantial new
3 efforts in public education regarding lead; notification; sampling and testing; and
4 development and maintenance of an inventory of residential lead service lines. In
5 addition to staff time to develop educational materials and letters, additional resources are
6 needed for printing, postage, and contracted services. Furthermore, the Department is
7 engaged in multiple large initiatives that require extensive community engagement,
8 including the Water Revitalization Plan, Green City, Clean Waters, and Storm Flood
9 Relief.

10
11 **III. CONCLUSION**

12
13 **Q18. DOES THIS CONCLUDE THIS PANEL'S DIRECT TESTIMONY?**

14 A18. Yes.

GLEN JOSEPH ABRAMS

glen.abrams@phila.gov

PROFILE

A dynamic professional with a history of finding solutions to complex urban and environmental problems through the creation of new policies and development of innovative programs. Experienced in a full range of planning, program management, and public policy activities within both the municipal and nonprofit sectors. Extremely comfortable working in collaborative environments, working directly with diverse stakeholders, and supervising staff. A very effective communicator who excels in conveying complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner. Work is consistently mission-driven and customer-focused.

EMPLOYMENT**Deputy Commissioner, Communications & Engagement**

August 2019 to present

PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT

Philadelphia, PA

Direct a comprehensive public affairs program for the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD), a large municipal nonprofit water, wastewater, and stormwater utility. This work includes the development and implementation of strategies to enhance PWD's services, communications, and engagement with its customers, all residents, elected officials, media, and key stakeholders. Work is carried out through an integrated team of 111 employees engaged in five key functional areas including a customer contact center, communications (consisting of media relations, digital communications, and graphic design), education, community engagement, and government affairs. Specific responsibilities include: establish and administer an annual program budget of approximately \$14.5 million, including \$6.6 million in contracted professional services; with staff, act as the spokesperson for the Water Commissioner on sensitive customer, community, and public affairs issues; convene and facilitate a variety of internal and external committees and task forces to improve internal and public facing communications, community engagement, and customer service; facilitate relationships with a variety of stakeholders; ensure that PWD meets its environmental obligations under regulatory requirements in the areas of partner collaborations and public education; direct customer research projects; participate in the development of departmental policies.

Senior Director of Planning and Sustainable Communities

May 2015 to August 2019

Director of Sustainable Communities

April 2013 to May 2015

PENNSYLVANIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Philadelphia, PA

Led the development, management and delivery of high-quality programming supporting urban greening, environmental education, civic engagement, community stewardship and sustainable practices. This work focused on establishing partnerships with municipal agencies, organizational stakeholders, and community volunteers to revitalize existing open spaces, create new open spaces, and develop community-based greening and stormwater management programs. Specific activities included: Supervised the work of 10 employees; Established and administered program budgets, totaling over \$2.3 million of private, corporate, and government funding; Developed requests for proposals for contracted professional services and provided oversight on multiple contracts with cumulative values exceeding \$1 million annually; Directed civic engagement efforts and open space planning and policy related projects in support of PHS programs and other activities; Directed tree planting and stewardship programs, including PHS Tree Tenders and TreeVitalize Watersheds; Managed the Philadelphia Water Department's residential stormwater management program ("Rain Check"); Developed, managed and promoted PHS policies and practices for sustainability focused on research, training and implementation that support community health and well-being including organic gardening, innovations in stormwater management, composting, and new applications of green technologies and design; Worked closely with the U.S. Forest

Service, co-located with PHS, to develop and promote innovative programs and undertake critical research to improve the health and quality of life of our communities; Worked with PHS project teams to develop and implement approaches and methods for assessing PHS programs; Worked closely with PHS Marketing and Communications teams to promote PHS programs and activities through conventional and social media, including writing press releases and planning media events.

Policy and Strategic Initiatives Manager

March 2011 to March 2013

Watersheds Planning Manager

February 2008 to February 2011

Watersheds Planner

November 2001 to January 2008

PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF WATERSHEDS

Philadelphia, PA

Led a multidisciplinary team of planners, public administrators, landscape architects, engineers, biologists, and educators responsible for developing plans, establishing administrative programs, formulating policies, forging partnerships and coordination strategies, designing and implementing demonstration projects, and educating stakeholders and the general public as part of a comprehensive watershed management program for the City of Philadelphia. Specific duties included: Supervised the work of ten (10) employees, and coordinated activities with other groups in the Water Department, other city agencies, outside organizations, and state and federal regulators; Established program budgets for Strategic Policy and Coordination group and the Office of Watersheds; Led the development of *Green City, Clean Waters*, a nationally recognized initiative that utilizes engineered landscape and site design practices (green stormwater infrastructure) to manage rainfall and mitigate combined sewer overflows ; Identified policy, regulatory and organizational impediments to the incorporation of green stormwater infrastructure approaches in public and private building practices and worked with administrators and elected officials to make necessary changes to advance the program; Directly participated in and/or provided oversight to staff for the development of various citywide planning initiatives, including *Philadelphia2035* (comprehensive plan update), *Greenworks Philadelphia* (citywide sustainability plan), *GreenPlan Philadelphia* and *Green2015* (comprehensive open space plan and action plan), and an update to the City's zoning code; Directly participated in and/or provided oversight to staff for the development of district and neighborhood plans, including the *Plan for the Central Delaware* and the *Tidal Schuylkill River Master Plan*; Developed requests for proposals for contracted professional services and managed and/or provided oversight on multiple contracts with cumulative values exceeding \$1 million annually; Administered grants, totaling more than \$2.95 million, to implement green infrastructure demonstration projects and provided technical assistance to schools, community groups and other nonprofit groups; Presented at conferences, workshops, and educational programs for diverse audiences, including elementary and high school children, local neighborhood groups, and planning and environmental professionals.

Adjunct Professor

September 2004 to May 2012

PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY

Philadelphia, PA

Developed and taught Environmental Science and Urban Hydrology classes for undergraduate students.

City Planner

July 1998 to November 2001

PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Philadelphia, PA

Performed planning studies to inform public policy decisions related to planning and development in Philadelphia. In addition, helped prepare the City's five-year capital program budget. Specific duties included: Data collection, utilizing published sources, such as Census data or marketing reports, and original data, such as surveys; Data analysis, utilizing database, spreadsheet and Geographic Information System (GIS) software; Report preparation and public presentations, utilizing desktop publishing and presentation software; Review and analysis of Capital Program budget requests for the City's Health Department, Prison System, Energy Office, Airports, and Department of Public Property to ensure

consistency with City's planning and policy initiatives. Major studies included: *New Century Neighborhoods*, a detailed study of Philadelphia neighborhoods and housing market focused on strengthening Philadelphia's position in the regional and national housing markets, *Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) Community Indicators*, an examination of indicators of physical distress and development opportunity for every block in the City of Philadelphia.

Grants Coordinator

June 1995 to July 1998

CITY OF COLUMBUS, FINANCE DEPARTMENT, GRANTS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
Columbus, OH

Assisted in the administration of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant funds utilized for a variety of community and economic development and affordable housing activities in the City of Columbus. Specific duties included: Developed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget; Coordinated application process for CDBG funding; Participated in community group meetings; Provided technical assistance in the areas of grant writing and program development to City divisions and nonprofit agencies; Researched federal, state and private grant opportunities and coordinated grant seeking efforts among the City divisions; Maintained a citywide grant inventory and resource library featuring private and corporate foundations with a particular interest in the Columbus area.

Associate Planner

June 1994 to June 1995

Planning Intern

September 1992 to June 1994

BURNS, BERTSCH, HARRIS & CARR, INC.
Columbus, OH

Provided planning services primarily to small municipalities and rural counties in Ohio and West Virginia. The firm specialized in securing and administering State and Federal funds for affordable housing development. Specific duties included: Collected and analyzed data to determine affordable housing and community development needs; Prepared studies to secure State and Federal affordable housing funding; Prepared grant applications for various housing, community, and economic development projects; Assisted in the administration and implementation of a \$500,000 State of Ohio Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) grant to operate a first time homebuyer and housing rehabilitation program in Wayne County, Ohio; Conducted group visioning and goal setting workshops; Performed land use analyses and infrastructure assessments for redevelopment projects.

EDUCATION

M.C.R.P. (Master of City and Regional Planning)
Graduate Study (Sociology)
B.A. (Psychology; Honors graduate)

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus, OH
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus, OH
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus, OH

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Delaware River Watershed Forum; 11/03/2022; Philadelphia, PA
Panelist: "Water Equity Needs and Challenges in the Urban Delaware River Estuary"

Tap Into Resilience Summit; 04/13/2022; Philadelphia, PA
Panelist: "Keeping Water Affordable for Everyone"

Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy; 12/02/2021; webinar
Panelist: "The Impacts of COVID-19 on Water Security and Environmental Justice"

Delaware Watershed Congress; 09/23/2021; webinar
"10 Years of Green City, Clean Waters: A 25-Year Plan for Stormwater Management"

Delaware River Watershed Forum; 10/17/2019; Allentown, PA
Panelist: "Green Stormwater Infrastructure: Triple-Bottom Line Benefits for the Delaware River Watershed"

One Water Summit; 09/19/2019; Austin, TX
"Philadelphia's 'One Water' Approach to Utility Management"

Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University – Town Square; 05/23/2018; Philadelphia, PA
"Horticulture and Water: Green Solutions to Protecting Water Quality"

Philadelphia Flower Show Water Summit; 03/07/2018; Philadelphia, PA
"PHS and Water Conservation: Inspiration, Innovation, and Action"

River Network; 12/05/2015; webinar
"Training a Green Infrastructure Workforce"

City Parks Association; 10/26/2015; webinar
"Green Infrastructure: Partnerships and Best Practices"

American Planning Association National Conference; 04/17/2012; Los Angeles, CA
"Implementing Green City, Clean Waters"

TEDxPhilly; 11/08/2011; Philadelphia, PA
"The Role of Green Stormwater Infrastructure in Creating a Sustainable Philadelphia"

American Planning Association National Conference; 04/09/2011; Boston, MA
"Green City, Clean Waters Plan"

Urban Land Institute Fall Meeting and Expo; 10/15/2010; Washington, DC
Panelist: "Elevating Green Building to the New Sustainable Water Paradigm"

American Planning Association National Conference; 04/12/2010; New Orleans, LA
Panelist: "Using Green Infrastructure to Realize the Greatest Benefit"

LAURA COPELAND

laura.copeland@phila.gov

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Skilled and dedicated communications professional with 13 years' experience serving as a chief departmental spokesperson. Highly focused and results-oriented in supporting complex, deadline-driven operations. Demonstrated ability in event planning management from inception to completion. Proficient in developing, editing and promoting informational materials and campaigns.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ASSISTANT DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, EDUCATION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Philadelphia Water Department (PWD), 2021 - Present

Manage 16 staff members in the Public Affairs Division to ensure compliance with educational and public participation regulatory requirements. Oversee the division's community engagement opportunities as well as presenting on behalf of the department at conferences. Serve as the department's liaison, advisor, and advocate, in developing and executing strategy to represent its political and operational interests before City Council, the Administration, state elected officials, federal entities and other stakeholders. Work collaboratively with the Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Deputy of Communications to enhance the strategic vision of the Public Affairs Division.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Philadelphia Water Department, 2007 - 2021

Served as the primary spokesperson in interviews with broadcast, radio and print media and coordinated media interviews with subject matter experts. Established and maintained effective working relationships with representatives of the news media as well as local, civic and government officials. Managed ceremonial events, including groundbreaking, ribbon cuttings and facility open houses, coordinating with City Council, inter-agency units as well as outside organizations. Oversaw production of the federally mandated annual Drinking Water Quality Report to ensure compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. Worked with the Public Affairs Communications team on seasonal promotional campaigns and provided customer service support to the Social Media team. Provided presentations on the department's customer assistance program to civic organizations and community groups. Served as the department's Language Access Coordinator, managing translations, interpreter coordination, employee language access training and preparing annual reports in accordance with the Mayor's Language Access Directive. Managed Public Affairs' employee participation community event schedule to ensure appropriate department representation.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST TRAINEE, 1 & 2

Philadelphia Water Department, 2000 - 2007

Represented the department in media interviews and served as the on-call representative during water main break emergencies. Organized and coordinated ceremonial events and prepared talking points for staff. Prepared promotional materials for media distribution and maintained media contact lists. Served as a liaison at community meetings, balancing customer advocacy with department goals. In 2003, assisted Philadelphia's Mayor's Office of Communications in preparing briefing documents for Mayor John F. Street and accompanied the Mayor, to official functions throughout the city of Philadelphia as a liaison between his honor and the local press. In late 2006, served as interim Public Relations Manager after a sudden vacancy in the position.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration

Marketing, 1995 (Magna Cum Laude)

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Fund for the Water Works

2020 - Present

Utility Emergency Services Fund

2009 - Present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Philadelphia, 2008

Dale Carnegie Leadership Training, 2005

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Active Duty, 1987 – 1991

Army Reserves, 1991 – 1995

Honorably Discharged

Paul Fugazzotto II

Career Summary

Experience in management, outreach, communications, customer service, and strategic planning. Resourceful problem solver promoting communication and collaboration. Focused on improving processes and developing and supporting teams. Recognized by peers as a flexible and fair leader.

Skills and Accomplishments

- Improved customer service by integrating social media into customer service interactions.
- Implemented project management standards to be used throughout Public Affairs.
- Expanded Departmental communications to include digital solutions.
- Developed the strategy and long-term vision for aligning digital properties and channels.
- Established a digital team and the process used to manage digital media platforms.
- Managed teams by establishing priorities and directing workflows.
- Maintained relationships with city-wide colleagues to foster communication and collaboration.
- Established partnerships to execute special events and demonstration projects.
- Developed programs to promote the goals of the department to stakeholders.
- Created a content strategy for creating and distributing content.
- Produced engaging messaging and persuasive copy for websites and social media.
- Directed media purchase and placement to promote customer assistance
- Managed professional services contracts and direct costs.

Relevant Professional Experience

Philadelphia Water Department
Assistant Deputy Commissioner
9/2019 - present

Philadelphia Water Department
Public Information Officer • 10/2016 to 8/2019
Public Relations Specialist • 5/2013 to 10/2016
Consultant • 9/2010 to 5/2013

Education

Purdue University • Graduate Coursework, Strategic Communications
Temple University • Graduate Coursework, Environmental Planning
West Virginia University • B.A., Liberal Arts
Bucks County Community College • Certificate, Historic Preservation